

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 128942

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING PARTICIPATION
IN ECLA MEETING

1. SUMMARY: PURSUANT TO RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED AT THE 17TH
SESSION OF THE UN ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
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(ECLA) PLENARY MEETING IN GUATEMALA CALLED FOR A REGIONAL
MEETING AT THE GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL CONVENING IN HAVANA,
JUNE 13-18, 1977, TO CONSIDER A DRAFT REGIONAL PLAN OF
ACTION FOR THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT. ALL
ECLA MEMBER GOVERNMENTS HAVE BEEN INVITED TO ATTEND. THE
DEPARTMENT HAS INFORMED ECLA THAT US WILL SEND A DELEGATION.

2. REPORTING REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE REPORTING PRIOR TO JUNE 10 ON: (A) WHETHER HOST COUNTRY WILL SEND A DELEGATION TO HAVANA MEETING; (B) COMPOSITION OF GOVERNMENT DELEGATION; (C) ANY OFFICIAL STATEMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN MADE ON THE CONFERENCE; (D) EMBASSY'S ASSESSMENT WHETHER DELEGATION MAY ATTEMPT TO INTRODUCE CONTENTIOUS OR EXTRANEIOUS POLITICAL ISSUES; (E) WILLINGNESS OF HOST COUNTRY DELEGATION TO WORK WITH USDEL IN ACHIEVING TWO MAJOR OBJECTIVES SET FORTH BELOW (LAST PARA); (F) HOST GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS ON THE ECLA DRAFT PLAN AND ITS

RELATIONSHIP TO OAS/IACW.

3. BACKGROUND: SUPPORT FOR PROGRAMS TO ADVANCE THE STATUS OF WOMEN HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT (A) US INITIATIVE IN THE UNITED NATIONS SINCE 1974 (B) WAS A MAJOR POINT IN THE US DECISION TO SUPPORT A WORLD CONFERENCE DURING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR. AND (C) THE US OBSERVANCE OF THE DECADE OF WOMEN 1976-1985. THE WORLD PLAN OF ACTION DEVELOPED AT THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR IN MEXICO CITY CONFERENCE IN 1975 AND APPROVED BY THE UNGA SERVES AS THE BASIC UN PROGRAM FOR THE DECADE. THE REGIONAL PLANS OF ACTION ARE AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THE PROGRAM AND THE ECLA DRAFT, WHICH WAS PREPARED BY EARLIER "MEETING OF EXPERTS IN THEIR PERSONAL CAPACITY" IS INTENDED AS THE BASIS FOR A LA REGIONAL PLAN.

4. BECAUSE OF ITS INTEREST IN THE GOALS OF THE DECADE, THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES, INTER AMERICAN COMMISSION OF WOMEN (OAS/IACW) DEVELOPED AND APPROVED A LIMITED CONFIDENTIAL

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REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION AT ITS 18TH ASSEMBLY LAST JULY, THAT IS NOW BEING IMPLEMENTED IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN.

4. GENERAL U.S. POSITION: US SUPPORTS A MEANINGFUL ROLE FOR BOTH ECLA AND THE OAS/IACW THAT WILL HELP EFFECTIVELY INTEGRATE WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT AND BRING THEM INTO THE MAIN STREAM OF COMMUNITY AND NATIONAL LIFE. WE BELIEVE THE OAS/IACW AND UN/ECLA SHOULD COORDINATE THEIR ACTIVITIES SO THAT THEY COMPLIMENT EACH OTHER AND MAKE EFFECTIVE USE OF THE SCARCE RESOURCES AVAILABLE. THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF ECLA ARTICLE 9, ADOPTED BY UNECOSOC STATE , "THE COMMISSION SHALL COOPERATE WITH AND TAKE THE NECESSARY MEASURES TO COORDINATE ITS ACTIVITIES WITH APPROPRIATE ORGANS OF THE INTER AMERICAN SYSTEM...TO AVOID ANY UN-NECESSARY DUPLICATION OF EFFORT BETWEEN THOSE ORGANS AND ITSELF;"

5. THE HAVANA CONFERENCE ALSO SHOULD AVOID BECOMING

EMBROILED IN EXTRANEIOUS POLITICAL CONTROVERSIES THAT ONLY WILL SERVE TO DISSIPATE THE ORGANIZATION'S ENERGY. THE ECLA DRAFT INVOLVES TWO OF THESE CONCERNS:

6. A. STRUCTURE: THE ECLA PLAN PROPOSES SETTING UP A REGIONAL INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON WOMEN REPRESENTING THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION; A REGIONAL CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND TRAINING FOR WOMEN, AND LIAISON OFFICES IN THE COUNTRIES

OF THE REGION. THIS STRUCTURE WOULD DUPLICATE THE OAS/IACW STRUCTURE WHICH, WITHIN THE OAS INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK CONSISTS OF COMMISSION AND PERMANENT SECRETARIAT IN WASHINGTON, D.C., NATIONAL LEVEL VOLUNTARY COMMITTEES OF COOPERATION WITH THE COUNTRY DELEGATES TO THE IACW AND A REGIONAL MULTINATIONAL WOMEN'S INSTITUTE FOR RESEARCH AND TRAINING NOW BEING ESTABLISHED IN BUENOS AIRES.

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7. B. POLITICAL ISSUES: THE ECLA PLAN INTRODUCES POLITICAL LANGUAGE WITH REFERENCES TO NIEO, CERDS, PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHILE WHICH ARE EXTRANEIOUS TO WOMEN'S ISSUES, WILL LEAD ONLY TO UNNECESSARY, CONTENTIOUS DEBATE, AND WILL DIVERT THE ENERGIES OF THE ORGANIZATION FROM ITS MANDATED PURPOSE. EMBASSY SHOULD ALSO BE AWARE THAT LACK OF CUBAN REPRESENTATION ON THE OAS/IACW IS A POINT OF CONCERN.

8. TALKING POINT: SHOULD OPPORTUNITY PRESENT ITSELF, YOU MAY WISH TO DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

- THE US IS COMMITTED TO THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AS MANIFESTED BY OUR INTENTION TO ATTEND THE ECLA HAVANA MEETING;
- WE ARE SEEKING TO COORDINATE EFFORTS OF THE ECLA AND THE OAS/IACW MORE EFFECTIVELY, AND TO MORE CLEARLY DEFINE THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY SO AS NOT TO NEEDLESSLY DUPLICATE SCARCE RESOURCES;
- THE US WILL NOT SUPPORT ANY SUPERVOSORY STRUCTURE PROPOSED BY ECLA WHICH DUPLICATES SIMILAR, EXISTING INSTITUTIONS.
- THERE ARE REFERENCES TO THE PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS IN THE PLAN, EMBASSY MAY WISH TO STATE OUR POSITION IN FOLLOWING LANGUAGE, "THE SUBJECT OF THE PANAMA CANAL TREATY IS A BILATERAL MATTER NOW UNDER ACTIVE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE US AND PANAMA GOVERNMENTS. CONSIDERATION OF THIS MATTER IN MULTILATERAL FORA WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE AND COULD WELL JEOPARDIZE PROGRESS BEING MADE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS.
- WE SHOULD POINT OUT THAT REFERENCES TO NIEO AND CERDS DO NOT PERTAIN TO WOMEN'S ISSUES AND SHOULD BE TAKEN OUT OF

THE PLAN- YOU MAY WISH TO REFER TO STATE TELEGRAM 097649
FOR GUIDELINES.

9. C. MISSION SHOULD EXPRESS STRONG HOPE THAT HOST COUNTRIES
DELEGATION WILL BE ABLE SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS AT THE CON-
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REFERENCE TO FOCUS ON TECHNICAL PROGRAMSWHICH WILL FACILITATE
THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT; AND WHICH
SEEKS TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF AVAILABLE RESOURCES. WE

WANT TO AVOID BECOMING EMBROILED IN UNPRODUCTIVE,
CONTENTIOUS POLITICAL DEBATES THAT WILL ONLY SERVE TO
DIVERT ENERGIES FROM ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF WOMEN. TO
THIS EFFORT, MISSIONS SHOULD EXPLORE POSSIBILITY THAT HOST
COUNTRY'S FM MIGHT COVER THESE POINTS WITH THEIR
DELEGATIONS. THIS POINT COULD BE TACTFULLY INTRODUCED BY
STATING THAT THE US ENDORSES THE REQUEST OF THE IACW
PRESIDENT IN A RECENT TELEGRAM TO OAS/IACW MEMBER COUNTRIES'
FM URGING THAT IACW DELEGATES BE INCLUDED IN DELEGATION
TO ECLA MEETING. CHRISTOPHER

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